

1 --11. A method for using a computer to facilitate a
2 transaction between a seller and at least one buyer, comprising:
3 receiving at the computer a binding offer to sell an
4 item which includes a binding sale price;
5 outputting the binding offer to sell to a plurality of
6 potential buyers; and
7 receiving acceptance of said binding offer to sell said
8 item from at least one buyer, said buyer tendering acceptance by
9 providing payment information.

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11 ~~12. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
13 blocking acceptance of said binding offer to sell by a
14 second buyer while said computer is receiving said acceptance
15 from said first buyer.~~

1 13. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
2 said buyer tendering acceptance by providing payment
3 information to said computer; and
4 processing said payment information to authorize said
5 acceptance of said binding offer to sell said item.

1 14. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
2 said buyer tendering acceptance by providing payment
3 information that identifies an account used in conjunction with
4 said computer that facilitates transactions.

1 15. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
2 said buyer tendering acceptance by providing payment
3 information that identifies credit card payment information.

1 16. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
2 notifying the seller of said acceptance of said binding
3 offer to sell said item.

1 17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
2 requiring delivery of said item from said seller to
3 said buyer by withholding said payment information from said
4 seller.

1 18. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
2 processing said payment information to collect funds
3 for said item;
4 deducting a predetermined commission for said sale of
5 said item for sale; and
6 transferring the remainder of said funds to said seller
7 as payment for said item for sale.

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1 19. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
2 processing said payment information to collect funds
3 for said item;
4 depositing said funds into an escrow account; and
5 requiring said seller to deliver said item for sale to
6 said buyer by withholding payment of said funds in said escrow
7 account to said seller.

1 20. The method of claims 11 further comprising:
2 requiring performance by said seller of the terms and
3 conditions of said binding offer to sell said item before
4 providing said seller with said payment information.

1 21. An apparatus for facilitating a transaction between a
2 seller and a plurality of buyers, comprising:
3 a storage device; and
4 a processor connected to said storage device, the
5 storage device storing a program for controlling the processor;
6 and
7 the processor operative to receive a binding offer to
8 sell an item which includes a binding price from the seller,
9 output the binding offer to sell to a plurality of potential
10 buyers, receive acceptance of said binding offer to sell said
11 item from at least one buyer by processing payment information
12 from said at least one buyer, and notifying said seller of said
13 acceptance of said binding offer to sell said item.

1 22. The apparatus of claim 21 in which the processor is
2 further operative to:

3 process said payment information to receive electronic
4 fund payment of said binding sale price, and notifying said
5 seller of receipt of said electronic fund payment.

1 23. The apparatus of claim 21 in which the processor is
2 further operative to:

3 withhold payment of said electronic funds received from
4 said buyer until said seller inputs information that identifies a
5 tracking code for a shipped item.

1 24. A system for facilitating a transaction between a buyer
2 and a seller comprising:

3 contracting between a seller and an automated computer
4 market;

5 inputting a description of an item for sale to said
6 automated computer market, said description containing a binding
7 offer to sell at an identified price;

8 providing access to said item description to at least
9 one buyer, said access including access to said binding offer
10 sell at price;

11 receiving a binding counteroffer from said at least one
12 buyer, said binding counteroffer including payment instructions;

13 providing access to said binding counteroffer from said
14 at least one buyer to said seller; and

15 accepting said binding counteroffer from said at least
16 one buyer by said seller.

1 25. The system of claim 24 further comprising:
2 accepting said binding counteroffer from said at least
3 one buyer by said seller by said automated computer market
4 processing said payment instructions in response to said seller's
5 acceptance.

1 26. The system of claim 24 further comprising:
2 accepting said binding counteroffer from said at least
3 one buyer by said seller by said automated computer market
4 providing said payment instructions to said seller.

1 27. The system of claim 24 in which said payment
2 instructions identify a credit card account.

1 28. The system of claim 25 in which processing said payment
2 instruction accesses an external clearinghouse.

1 29. The system of claim 24 in which said payment
2 instructions identify an account maintained by said automated
3 computer market.

1 30. The system of claim 24 further comprising:
2 rejection by said seller of said binding counteroffer